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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT
No. 553

AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CITY OF REFUGE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, IN THE TERRI- TORY OF HAWAII

JUNE 13, 1951.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. REDDEN, from the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 1733]

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 1733) to authorize the establishment of the City of Refuge National Historical Park, in the Territory of Hawaii, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill, as amended, do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Page 9, line 8, strike the words "donation, purchase, or otherwise," and insert in lieu thereof the words "donation or purchase,".

EXPLANATION OF THE BILL

The purpose of the bill is to bring into the system of national parks the historical City of Refuge, a semiwalled enclosure of approximately 180 acres located at Honaunau in the South Kona area of the Island of Hawaii.

The Department of the Interior has recommended the enactment of this legislation. An official of the National Park Service testified at hearings on H. R. 1713 that the Department had been advised all of the land will be donated for the national historic park.

The City of Refuge was established prior to the year 1700 and served as a sanctuary for the weak and the aged, the oppressed, the criminal, and the political or military fugitive. The royal tomb of Hale o Keawe, built about 1690, was connected with it and it housed the remains of Hawaiian royalty until 1829, when they were removed to a secret cave elsewhere on the island.

The area is partly surrounded by lava walls, some of which are about 15 feet thick and 12 feet high. In addition to the historic

2 ESTABLISH CITY OF REFUGE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, HAWAII

values, the area is of scenic and scientific importance. Many of its burial caves have been rocked over. It also has many cliff caves.

The Advisory Board of National Parks, established pursuant to the August 23, 1935, act of Congress, has adopted a resolution recognizing the City of Refuge as being of national significance. The National Parks Association, the commissioners of the county of Hawaii, and the Honaunau PTA have endorsed this proposal.

The movement to preserve the site goes back a half a century when part of the land was privately purchased to be retained as a monument. In 1902 private funds enabled partial restoration of the City of Refuge and in 1919 further restoration work was done by the Bishop Museum of Honolulu.

Following is the favorable report of the Department of the Interior:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., April 19, 1951.

HON. JOHN R. MURDOCK,
*Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. MURDOCK: Your committee has requested a report on H. R. 1733, entitled "A bill to authorize the establishment of the City of Refuge National Historical Park, in the Territory of Hawaii, and for other purposes." This proposed legislation would authorize the establishment of the City of Refuge National Historical Park at Honaunau in the South Kona area of the island of Hawaii, within the areas described in three parcels which aggregate approximately 180 acres.

We recommend the enactment of this proposed legislation.

The City of Refuge was established prior to 1700 as a sanctuary to which the weak, the aged, the oppressed, the criminal, the political, and military fugitive could go for protection. The site commemorates the growth of clemency and social justice in Hawaii before the coming of the white man. Its development and history are a dramatic story of the Hawaiian people. The City of Refuge is a large semiwalled enclosure. The lava walls are 15 feet thick and 12 feet high. The royal tomb of Hale o Keawe, built about 1690, and which housed the bones of Hawaiian royalty until 1829, is one of the principal features of the area and has been partially restored.

Our opinion of this area, which has been reached after a thorough investigation, is that the City of Refuge is of national historical significance and, therefore, is worthy of preservation by the Federal Government. This view is shared by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments, which was established by the authority of the Congress to render advice concerning matters of this kind. Because of the features of the City of Refuge which still remain, notably the great lava walls and the royal tomb therein, the area will continue to be of great interest to visitors to the island of Hawaii.

We note that there are three typographical errors in the bill, as follows: On page 6, line 13, the word "Honaunua" should be corrected to read "Honaunau"; on page 6, line 15, "Tianguation" should be corrected to read "Triangulation"; and on page 7, line 16, the word "cordinates" should be corrected to read "coordinates."

The Bureau of the Budget has advised me that there would be no objection to the submission of this report to your committee. That Bureau has further advised, however, that "it is the President's policy to curtail new activities which do not contribute to the defense effort. Therefore, in the event of enactment of H. R. 1733, appropriation estimates for maintenance of this park should be held in abeyance until such time as conditions warrant consideration of additional items of expense of this character."

Sincerely yours,

DALE E. DOTY.

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs unanimously recommends the enactment of H. R. 1733.